International co-operation in Agriculture Sector

1505. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the international co-operation in the field of agriculture; and

(b) to what extent this co-operation grew during the last 2 years and what steps are being taken for further integrated growth of international co-operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) The thrust of international cooperation in the field of agriculture, through multilateral and bi-lateral route, is to further strengthen Indian agriculture and assist developing countries in capacity building under South-South Cooperation. The cooperation in the field of agriculture is being pursued through our membership and role in the organizations such as FAO and WFP and the mechanism of Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements/Work Plans signed with the interested countries.

India's advocacy role in FAO and Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and assistance to developing and least developed countries have been appreciated internationally.

(b) More than 20 MoUs/Agreements/Work Plans have been signed during the last two years in the field of agriculture and allied activities.

Pursuit of International Cooperation is guided by the national interest in the field of agriculture. In order to make cooperation comprehensive and holistic the government encourage trade and promotes business cooperation. Cooperation with countries and institutions which have technology relevant to the country is also encouraged.

Role of Central Government in agricultural marketing

1506. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the role Central Government is playing in the field of Agricultural Marketing; and

(b) the expectations of the State Governments from the Centre and to what extent and in what manner the Central Government proposes to meet those expectations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Since agriculture is a State subject, the Central Government is playing the role of a facilitator to the State Governments/Union Territories in the field of agricultural marketing on policies for development, improvement of agricultural marketing infrastructure and for formulation of uniform marketing practices to ensure better price realization by the farmers.

(b) The expectations of the State Governments are for technical advice and support by the Central Government for strengthening the efforts made by them for development/strengthening of

agricultural marketing in the States. The budget component for development/strengthening of agricultural marketing infrastructure is met from different plan schemes being implemented by Ministry of Agriculture under Macro Management Scheme, Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Horticulture Mission, Marketing Research and Information Network (AGMARKNET), Construction of Rural Godowns, Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure Grading and Standardization. The technical advice on the matters relating to agricultural marketing is rendered by the two organizations under the Ministry of Agriculture viz. Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI), Faridabad and Ch. Charan Singh National Institute of Agricultural Marketing, (NIAM), Jaipur.

Monitoring of Kharif crops sowing

1507. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has advised States to monitor constantly Kharif sowing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the advise is due to delay in monsoon; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, convened the meeting of the Principal Secretaries/Secretaries alongwith the technical persons of the States in the Central and Southern parts of the country on 25.6.2009 to review the impact of slow progress of monsoon on the sowings of agriculture crops and alternate plans if the current trends continues. In view of the prevalent weather conditions, the states have drown up contingency Crop Plan for implementation, if the rains are delayed/not received by 15th July, 2009. Following this, three video conferences were held involving the States of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Assam and Bihar. On 14th July, Video Conferencing by Secretary (AMC) with Principal Secretary, Agriculture of the States of Punjab, Haryana, U.P., Bihar, Maharashtra and M.P. was organized to discuss the progress of Monsoon and the crops coverage so far.

The Government is closely monitoring the situation on day to day basis. The States have also been advised to identify the pockets of distress, if any, and take remedial measures. The Ministry also intends to increase the allocation under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and give more flexibility to States to use these Schemes to meet the contingent situation particularly for purchase and distribution of seeds for alternate crops/varieties and support for micro-irrigation etc.